

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0517

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SAIGON 6927

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT VS

SUBJECT: PROFESSOR HUY' S COMMENTS ON GVN TACTICS AT PARIS TALKS

REF: SAIGON 6564

1. PROFESSOR NGUYEN NGOC HUY, MEMBER OF THE GVN DELEGATION TO THE PARIS TALKS WITH THE PRG, TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER APRIL 21 THAT DURING HIS WEEK' S VISIT IN SAIGON HE HAD DISCUSSED THE PARIS TALKS IN DETAIL WITH PRESIDENT THIEU AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND REACHED AGREEMENT ON THE GENERAL LINE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE COMING WEEKS. HUY LEAVES FOR PARIS ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE 21 ST.

2. EXPECTED COMUNIST TACTIC HUY SAID THAT THE GVN EXPECTS THE COMMUNIST SIDE TO RELEASE THE 400 CIVILIAN PRISONERS WHICH IT CLAIMS TO HOLD SOMETIME NEAR THE END OF THE 90- DAY PERIOD STIPULATED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. THE PRG WOULD THEN ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE PROPAGANDA POINT THAT IT HAD LIVED UP TO THE SPIRIT AND TEXT OF THE AGREEMENTS WHILE THE GVN WAS ATTEMPTING TO BLOCK THEIR IMPLEMENTATION, ACCORDING TO HUY.

3. PROPOSED GVN COUNTER: TO COUNTER THIS, HUY SAID THAT THIEU HAD
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ACCEPTED HUY' S SUGGESTION THAT THE GVN (A) RELEASE A GREATER NUMBER OF CIVILIAN DETAINEES, PERHAPS 500, WHILE REMINDING THE DRV AND THE WORLD THAT THERE ARE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF GVN CIVILIAN DETAINEES STILL HELD BY THE COMMUNIST SIDE; (B) MAKE THE FORMAL PROPOSAL THAT AN ELECTION FOR A " NATIONAL ASSEMBLY " TAKE PLACE IN THE SOUTH WHICH WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO DECIDE THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF SVN. IT COULD, FOR EXAMPLE, DETERMINE WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC. HUY BELIEVES THAT THESE TWO ACTIONS WOULD PLACE THE GVN IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE POSITION VIS- A- VIS THE COMMUNIST SIDE IN THE X PLUS 90 SITUATION.

4. COMMUNIST INTENTIONS: HUY REPEATED HIS EARLIER BELIEF (REFTEL) THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE NO INTENTION OF AGREEING TO AN ELECTION AT THIS TIME, KNOWING THAT IN VIEW OF GVN CONTROL OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION, THEY WOULD SURELY LOSE. HE SAID THAT, BASED ON HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS IN PARIS WHO CONTACT THE COMMUNISTS,

HE BELIEVES THAT THE LATTER WANT AGREEMENT ON A COALITION CABINET AND ON A SINGLE LIST FOR AN ELECTION OF A NEW LEGISLATIVE BODY, A LIST WHICH WOULD INCLUDE BOTH NATIONALISTS AND COMMUNISTS.

5. THIEU' S PREFERENCE: HUY SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THAT PRESIDENT THIEU ALSO WOULD PREFER THAT THERE NOT BE AN ELECTION AT THIS TIME ALTHOUGH HE WOULD ACCEPT AN ELECTION FOR THE KIND OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MENTIONED ABOVE (PARA. 3) IF NECESSARY. HUY GAVE HIS VIEW THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WOULD PREFER TO KEEP THE COMPETITION WITH THE COMMUNISTS IN THE MILITARY SPHERE BECAUSE HE FEELS THAT THIS IS WHERE HE IS STRONGEST. IN ANY CASE, THIEU DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD ACCEPT THE KIND OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION DESCRIBED IN PARA 3. HUY REPEATED THAT HE BELIEVED THIEU HOPED TO AVOID THIS POSSIBILITY.

6. NATIONALIST CANDIDATES: HUY ALSO REPEATED HIS VIEW THAT IN AN ELECTION CONDUCTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THIEU COULD DEFEAT A COMMUNIST CANDIDATE BECAUSE THE WEIGHT OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THE SOUTH IS AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE THIEU REGIME ARE WIDELY KNOWN AMONG THE POPULACE, IT IS STILL PREFERABLE TO THE MAJORITY OF VIETNAMESE OVER THE COMMUNISTS. IN THE LONGER RUN, HUY WARNED, IT MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THE NATIONALIST SIDE TO PUT FORWARD A CANDIDATE WITH HIGHER PRESTIGE AMONG THE PEOPLE. " IN THE EVENT THAT IT BECOMES NECESSARY AGAIN TO NOMINATE A MILITARY MAN, I WOULD FULLY SUPPORT

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GENERAL NGO QUANG TRUONG, WERE HE WILLING TO RUN", HUY SAID.
BUNKER

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